

# Final Curtain Call for Abandoned, Derelict Dinner Theater in Middle Island

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**Farmingville, NY** - On Tuesday, May 12 Supervisor Ed Romaine, Councilwoman Connie Kepert and Councilman Dan Panico were joined by local civic leaders and residents to witness the demolition of the long vacant and dilapidated Island Squire Dinner Theatre. Closed for nearly 20 years, the once popular establishment located on Middle Country Road in Middle Island had deteriorated into a dangerous eyesore in the community. The Town Board approved the demolition at a public hearing on April 16 in accordance with Chapter 73 of the Town Code, which provides a "fast track" to rid neighborhoods of unsafe structures. The cost of demolition and debris removal is placed as a lien on the tax bill of the property and is paid by the owner - not the taxpayers. Pictured left to right are Middle Island Civic Association President Gail Lynch-Bailey, Supervisor Romaine, Councilwoman Kepert and Councilman Panico.

The Town boarded and secured the building on numerous occasions since being vacant, but vandals and squatters still managed to enter and cause more damage to the structure. It has also been the site of illegal drug activity, graffiti and garbage dumping. In addition to other structural issues on the property, the interior roof of the building has collapsed. The property owners have been issued numerous violations over the years and Town engineers declared the building unsafe for occupancy.



"The Island Squire was one of the most notorious vacant structures in the entire Town and its demolition has been a long time in coming," said Supervisor Romaine. "Thanks to our Law, Building and Waste Management Departments and the persistence of the Middle Island civics and local residents, this eyesore will no longer be a blight on the Middle Island landscape."

"The site of the old Island Squire, which once hosted shows such as Fiddler on the Roof, closed 20 years ago and this once famous dinner theater has slowly deteriorated and become a blight on the community," said Councilwoman Kepert. "The property owners have been issued numerous violations over the years for property

maintenance violations by the Town's Waste Management, Building, and Law Departments. Recently, the Town Board was able to declare the structure a health and safety hazard due to the collapse of the roof. I am a Middle Islander,

and I say it is time to tear down this terrible eyesore!"

Gail Lynch-Bailey, President of the Middle Island Civic Association said, "Today's demolition is an important and bittersweet day for Middle Island. The Island Squire hosted thousands of happy events and holds many memories. But its dilapidated state was a terrible blight on our community. With its removal, we can work to revitalize this parcel and improve our Main Street corridor. I am so relieved to finally answer the number one question I'm always asked: 'When is the old Island Squire coming down?' It's today. Thank you, Town of Brookhaven."

Tom Talbot, Middle Island Civic Association Treasurer said, "I had been told by my family members that this dinner/theatre was once a respectable facility that was known far and wide, and was a proud symbol of Middle Island. Sadly, over the years, the structure deteriorated to the point of no-return. However, I believe that today's action of demolition will instill a new feeling and bring confidence to the community and demonstrate a commitment that will spark progressive direction in many more areas. Middle Island residents are proud of their community, and from this day on we can look forward with a new energy and purpose."



**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

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